

Message Text

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64/63

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 SAJ-01 NIC-01 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5049

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

S E C R E T MANILA 8141

ECORRECTED COPY TEXT - PARA -NBRED FOUR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, XC

SUBJECT: CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

REF: A. MANILA 6127 B. STATE 135797 C. BANGKOK 10367

D. HONG KONG 6603 E. JAKARTA 7977 F. KUALA LUMPUR 3025

G. PEKING 1119 H. RANGOON 1769 I. TAIPEI 4173

J. TOKYO 8434

1. REF A, ENTITLED "THE YELLOW PERIL", WAS AN EFFORT TO
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PRECIPITATE POLICY BY ACUPUNCTURE. IT DELIBERATELY GAVE

SEPARATE CONSIDERATIONS TO (A) CHINA'S LONG TERM INTENTIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND (B) CHINA'S SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM CAPABILITIES TO REALIZE THOSE INTENTIONS. I THINK THE RESULTANT COLLOQUY ON THESE ISSUES HAS BEEN STIMULATING AND VALUABLE TO ALL CONSUMERS.

2. HOWEVER, NEARLY ALL THE REPLIES, WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF PEKING'S ADDRESSED THEMSELVES ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO THE QUESTION OF CAPABILITIES. TOKYO, NEVERTHELESS, IN PARA 4 OF REF J, INTRODUCED A VERY COGENT OBSERVATION ON THE PRC DILEMMA INHERENT IN THE PROBABLE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN SHORT-TERM EXPEDIENCES WHICH CHINA ENCOURAGES, AND LONG TERM AMBITIONS WHICH IT DESIRES.

3. FOR WHAT IT MAY BE WORTH, INSOFAR AS CHINESE SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM CAPABILITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES ARE CONCERNED, I SHARE THE GENERAL ASSESSMENTS MADE BY HONG KONG AND TAIPEI AND THOSE WHICH ARE PERHAPS MORE RELEVANTLY CONSTRUED FOR THE ASEAN SCENE BY KUALA LUMPUR. IN OTHER WORDS, I DOUBT WHETHER CHINA CAN SERIOUSLY UNDERMINE U.S. AND JAPANESE INFLUENCE HERE IN THE NEAR TERM. NEVERTHELESS, AS FAR AS CHINA'S LONG TERM INTENTIONS ARE CONCERNED, I REMAIN OF THE VIEW, BUTTRESSED BY THE OBSERVATIONS FROM PEKING, THAT THEY POSE AN EVENTUAL DIRECT CHALLENGE TO U.S. AND JAPANESE INTERESTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

4. HOWEVER, AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT AND WITH OTHER OBSERVERS THAT NOTHING SIGNIFICANTLY UNTOWARD IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN "ON OUR WATCH", DOES NOT RPT NOT MEAN THAT WE CAN ASSUME THE COMPLACENCY OF TOTAL PASSIVITY, AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE OBSERVATIONS IN PARA 10 OF REF B WERE NOT RPT NOT INTENDED TO PRESCRIBE SUCH PASSIVITY. IN FACT, I WOULD ASSUME THAT THE "POSITIVE" GOAL SUGGESTED IN THAT PARAGRAPH OUGHT TO HAVE THE "NEGATIVE" OBJECTIVE OF LIMITING CHINA'S CAPABILITY TO DAMAGE U.S. AND JAPANESE INTERESTS SIGNIFICANTLY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

5. THEREFORE, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR INTERESTED POSTS TO RAISE CERTAIN POLICY MATTERS WHICH NEED TO BE RESOLVED IN THIS CONTEXT AND TO SEEK SOME CONSENSUS ON THOSE

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POLICIES. I DOUBT IT WOULD BE FEASIBLE FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL POST TO RAISE THE WHOLE COMPLEX OF THOSE ITEMS WHICH AFFECT ITS INTERESTS, BUT, PERHAPS THROUGH RAISING INDIVIDUAL ITEMS OF CONCERN, WE CAN DEVELOP A MATREX OF POLICY.

6. FOR EXAMPLE, HERE IN MANILA WE ARE BADLY IN NEED OF SOME POLICY GUIDANCE WITH RESPECT TO THE FUTURE OF THE U.S.

MILITARY PRESENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. OUR TWO MILITARY BASES IN CLARK AND SUBIC CONSTITUTE THE PRINCIPAL FACILITIES IN THIS AREA, AND ARE AVAILABLE TO US ONLY UNTIL 1991, UNDER CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS. SEVENTEEN YEARS IS A RELATIVELY SHORT TIME, FOR PLANNING PURPOSES, AND ITS HORIZONS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED. IF WE TRULY INTEND TO LEAVE THESE BASES IN 1991 (OR IF WE ARE COMPELLED TO DO SO BEFORE THAT TIME EITHER BY THE U.S. CONGRESS OR EXTERNAL INFLUENCES) WE OUGHT TO BEGIN WORKING NOW ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A DECISION. MINDFUL OF THE RATHER DISORDERLY WAY IN WHICH THE BRITISH LEFT SINGAPORE, WE OUGHT TO GIVE SOME ORDERLY THOUGHT TO THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUR DEPARTURE.

7. IF WE PRESUME, AS IN ALL THE RESPONSES TO THE YELLOW PERIL CABLE, THAT THE UNITED STATES IS GOING TO CONTINUE TO HAVE A STRATEGIC ROLE TO PLAY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, WE PRESUMABLY MUST FIND SOME OTHER BASE STRUCTURE FROM WHICH TO PLAY THAT ROLE, AND PREPARE THE NATIONS IN THE REGION FOR THE SHIFT. IF WE PRESUME, CONTRARY TO OUR CURRENT POSTURE, THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT RPT NOT PLAY A DIRECT STRATEGIC ROLE IN THIS REGION, WE MUST BEGIN NOW TO DEVELOP SOME SECURITY SUBSTITUTES TO REPLACE US. WE NEED TO DETERMINE WHETHER WE THINK THIS OUGHT TO BE AN INDIGENOUS GROUPING OF NATIONS, OR MULTINATIONAL ABNEGATION ALONG THE LINES OF MALAYSIA'S "ZONE OF PEACE AND NEUTRALITY," OR MERELY CATCH-AS-CATCH-CAN.

8. IT MAY BE THAT, UPON DUE CONSIDERATION OF ALL ALTERNATIVES, A POLICY DECISION WILL BE TAKEN TO ATTEMPT TO HOLD ON TO OUR BASES HERE AFTER 1991. SUCH A DECISION WOULD SET A TOTALLY DIFFERENT SET OF ACTIONS INTO TRAIN. THERE WOULD NEED TO BE ARRANGEMENTS HERE IN THE PHILIPPINES (AT SOME COST), ARRANGEMENTS TO PLACATE THE ASEAN STATES,

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ARRANGEMENTS DIRECTED TOWARDS THE GREAT POWERS, AND ARRANGEMENTS VIS-A-VIS OUR LOCAL ALLIES.

9. AS MATTERS NOW STAND, WE ARE IN THE ANOMALOUS POSITION OF ASSUMING THAT OUR BASE RIGHTS WILL TERMINATE, AS AGREED, IN 1991, BUT COMPORTING OURSELVES AS THOUGH WE EXPECT TO BE HERE IS PERPETUITY. SINCE WE CLEARLY CAN NOT RPT NOT HAVE IT BOTH WAYS, WE NEED A DECISION. THAT DECISION WILL ALSO HAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND OUR TRADE AND AID PROGRAMS, AS WELL AS WIDESPREAD CONSEQUENCE IN THE WHOLE REGION.

10. I HAVE POSED THIS POLICY QUESTION AS A NATURAL OUTGROWTH OF THE COLLOQUY ON "THE YELLOW PERIL" BECAUSE IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PRIME CONSIDERATION WHICH MUST BE

TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MAKING A DECISION ABOUT U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA WILL BE CHINESE POLICY IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. THEREFORE, THE QUESTION SHOULD BE VIEWED AS AN EFFORT TO EXTRAPOLATE THE CONCEPTUAL CONCLUSIONS OF THAT COLLOQUY INTO CONCRETE APPLICATION WITH RESPECT TO A PRESSING PROBLEM. THERE ARE OTHER QUESTIONS OF THIS SAME NATURE WHICH OTHER POSTS MAY FEEL MORE RELEVANT TO THEIR PARTICULAR CONCERNS. IT WILL BE IN ADDRESSING SUCH QUESTIONS THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL COME UP WITH COHERENT GUIDANCE FOR THOSE OF US ATTEMPTING TO IMPLEMENT U.S. POLICY IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. UNTIL WE HAVE SUCH GUIDANCE, OUR EFFORTS ARE BOUND TO SUFFER FROM AN INSUFFICIENCY OF CONCEPTUAL CONTENT.

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